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# THE PEOPLE AT THE EDGE OF THE EMPIRE

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The representation of the Breton and Lombard identities in Carolingian  
historiography, 751 - 901

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## List of abbreviations

AB	-	Annales Bertiniani
AF	-	Annales Fuldenses
ARF	-	Annales Regni Francorum
AV	-	Annales Vedastini
AX	-	Annales Xantenses

## Introduction

Brittany and Lombardy, nowadays these are two regions at the edges of respectively France and Italy. One enclosed by the rough Atlantic ocean and the other overshadowed by the Alps. However, both are home to proud people with their own languages, a culture and identity distinct from their national culture and identity, and both know independency movements. Both the Bretons and the Lombards claim a history that can be traced back to the early middle ages. In that period they did not live on the borders of the republics of France and Italy, which would come into being during the nineteenth century; they were on the borders of the Carolingian Empire. The Bretons, as refugees from the British Isles, and Lombards, who had their own kingdom in Italy for nearly two centuries, had their own identities and did not feel too much at home within this Empire. As we shall see, this would often lead to conflict with their Frankish rulers.

This thesis will look into these early medieval identities of the Bretons and Lombards. However, the chosen perspective is not that of the respective peoples themselves, on the contrary, it is the perspective of their Frankish overlords. The question is how these peoples, the Lombards and Bretons, were represented in Carolingian historiography from 751, when Pippin overthrew the Merovingians, to 901, the last year covered by the sources used in this thesis. What was the identity of these peoples according to their Frankish contemporaries? Why are the Bretons and Lombards presented in a specific manner? And how does the image crafted of them develop over the course of the late eighth and ninth century? I will try to answer these questions in two parts. Firstly, we will look at the Lombard and Breton identities in the period before the Treaty of Verdun from 843, which resulted in the division of the Carolingian Empire between Charles the Bald (823 – 877), Louis the German (ca. 806 – 876) and Lothar (795 – 855). The second chapter will look into how the Lombard and Breton identities develop after 843. This year marks not only the Treaty of Verdun, but from an identity point of view it is interesting as well. From this point onwards, political fragmentation and shifting loyalties would lead to the disappearance of coherent, representations of, Lombard and Breton identities in the sources. Before we can start the analysis of the Breton and Lombard identities, however, we should first look into how the Franks and Carolingians saw themselves, what medieval identities entail according to modern scholarship and to the background of the sources this thesis is based upon.

## The Frankish Identity

The Frankish worldview, and their place within it, was based on both Roman as well as biblical ideas.<sup>1</sup> If we look at Einhard's (ca. 770 – 840) work, for instance, we see that he wrote about the *populus*

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<sup>1</sup> Walter Pohl, 'Creating cultural resources for Carolingian rule: historians of the Christian empire', in: Clemens Gantner, Rosamond McKitterick and Sven Meeder (eds.), *The resources of the past in early medieval Europe*

*Francorum* who fought against the *nationes* of the Saxons. The opposition between *populus* and *nationes* (or *gentes*) was based on the Roman division of the *populus Romanus*, a people united by law and history, and the *gentes* at the borders of the Roman Empire, which by the Romans were perceived to consist of members bonded by a biological kinship; meaning one was member of a *gens* by birth.<sup>2</sup> Even more important than the Roman influences, however, is the biblical basis for Frankish ethnography. The Old Testament knows a similar division of peoples as the Romans did; with the Jews representing the role of *populus*, whilst the *goyim* were the biblical version of the *gentes*.<sup>3</sup>

Especially the latter division, from the Old Testament, would become an important feature of Carolingian thinking and rulership. Already in Merovingian times Frankish kingship was presented as being a Christian kingship, sometimes comparing kings to the rulers of the Old Testament.<sup>4</sup> In the early 750's papal letters addressed to Pepin the Short's (ca. 714 – 768) court would compare Frankish kings with Moses and king David, and the Franks with the biblical Israelites, God's chosen people. However, this rhetoric was not Carolingian, but papal, and fell out of use around Charlemagne's coronation in 768.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, this same year also marked the first time *gratia Dei* was added to the title of the Frankish kings; Frankish kingship now was a Christian kingship in name as well.<sup>6</sup>

When the *Admonitio Generalis* was issued in 789, a work that emphasized the Christian nature of Frankish kingship and the kingdom, the Biblical comparisons returned, now in the Carolingian court circle itself. Charlemagne, again, was likened to king David and the Frankish people, again, were presented as God's chosen people.<sup>7</sup> The term *populus Christianus* was used more and more to refer to the Franks, not only in 'propagandistic' literature like the *ARF*, but in law as well.<sup>8</sup> The identity the Carolingians designed for themselves, was not an ethnic Frankish identity, it was a Christian identity. The king ruled God's chosen people and was their shepherd, like King David once had been as well. Conquered people were not integrated in the 'Frankish' community and identity, but in a Christian

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(Cambridge, 2015), 15 – 33, here 15; Mayke de Jong, 'Het woord en het zwaard: aan de grenzen van het vroegmiddeleeuwse Christendom', *Tijdschrift voor de Geschiedenis* 118:3 (2005), 464 – 482, here 470.

<sup>2</sup> Mayke de Jong writes: 'Volgens de Romeinse classificatie ontleenden de 'volkeren' of 'stammen' (*gentes*) buiten de rijksgrenzen hun samenhang aan biologisch verwantschap; de Romeinen zelf daarentegen, waren een *populus*, een volk dat zijn eenheid dankte aan een gemeenschappelijke geschiedenis en gezamenlijk recht.' Patrick Geary is more nuanced by not explicitly using the word 'biological', although he implies it by stating a person became part of a *gens* by birth. Geary emphasizes a *gens* was more culturally, geographically and linguistically united, whilst a *populus* was united by history, law and a political system. See: De Jong, 'Het woord', 470; Patrick Geary, *The myth of nations: the medieval origins of Europe* (Princeton, 2002), 49 – 52.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, 470.

<sup>4</sup> Ildar Garipzanov, *The symbolic language of authority in the Carolingian world (c. 751 – 877)* (Leiden/Boston, 2008), 267.

<sup>5</sup> Mary Garrison, 'Franks as the new Israel? Education for a new identity from Pippin to Charlemagne', in: Yitzhak Hen and Matthes Innes (eds.), *The uses of the past in the early middle ages* (Cambridge, 2000), 114 – 161, here 123 – 128.

<sup>6</sup> Garipzanov, *The symbolic*, 268.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibidem*, 272 - 273.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, 283.

community and identity. For instance, when Einhard wrote about the defeat of the Saxons, he presents their conversion as the reason they become 'one people' with the Franks.<sup>9</sup> It is this, strong, Christian discourse that dictates how other peoples are perceived and represented in Carolingian historiography. However, (early) medieval identities are far from straight-forward and how we as modern scholars can grasp and research them has been widely debated.

### Status Quaestionis

In modern times nationality is an important marker of identity for many people. Nationality is a modern concept that was unknown in the middle ages. The idea of *gentes* has wrongly been likened, and sometimes seen as predecessor, to this modern concept, although it is perhaps the closest medieval equivalent of a nation.<sup>10</sup> The term *gentes* is often used in early medieval literature, but as a concept, however, it is problematic. What exactly a *gens*, and gentile identity, entails and how it can be determined is unclear, not only for modern scholars, but perhaps also for medieval people both 'inside' and 'outside' of a certain *gens*; it is not a stable and given fact.<sup>11</sup> However, the Bretons and Lombards fall within this framework, in which the people inhabiting Europe are ordered by their *gens*. It would be wise to look into what these ethnic identities are build up from and how they can be studied in a meaningful manner.

Reinhard Wenskus' '*ethnogenesis* theory', although based on earlier ideas, was the first concept to describe how early medieval ethnic identities were shaped out of, largely, thin air. Wenskus' idea revolves around a *Traditionskern*, a small elite group of people, that would create an ethnic tradition and tried to gather other people to join. Myths, memories and customs inspired the belief that the people had a common origin and heritage, and should live according to certain customs, rules and values because of it.<sup>12</sup> The ethnogenesis theory has been the most important model used in studying early medieval *gentes* and the creation of their identity, but it is not without its critics.

Charles Bowlus argues *ethnogenesis* is a rather useless term that only can work by applying it strictly. This means only few *gentes* can be studied from the perspective of *ethnogenesis*. For instance, Goths and Lombards, with written histories and origin stories, can be studied with Wenskus' model;

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<sup>9</sup> Helmut Reimitz, *History, Frankish identity and the framing of western ethnicity, 550 – 850* (Cambridge, 2015), 422.

<sup>10</sup> Janet Nelson, 'Frankish identity in Charlemagne's empire', in: Ildar Garipzanov, Patrick Geary and Przemyslaw Urbanczyk (eds.), *Franks, Northmen, and Slavs: identities and state formation in early medieval Europe* (Turnhout, 2008), 71 – 83, here 71-72; Patrick Geary, 'Ethnic identity as a situational construct in the early middle ages', in: Florin Curta and Cristina Spinei (eds.), *Writing history: identity, conflict, and memory in the middle ages* (Bucharest, 2012), 1 – 18, here 1-2; Reimitz, *History*, 6.

<sup>11</sup> Nelson, 'Frankish', 72 - 73; Reimitz, *History*, 3 - 4.

<sup>12</sup> Walter Pohl, 'The construction of communities: an introduction', in: Richard Corradini, Max Diesenberger and Helmut Reimitz (eds.), *The construction of communities in the early middle ages : texts, resources and artefacts* (Leiden, 2003), 1 – 16, here 1 - 4.

although this can only be done when the scholar assumes these histories were written with the goal of creating or promoting a *gens*, and excluding the possibility an author could have had other aims.<sup>13</sup> If the concept is not applied this rigidly, it becomes a vague concept devoid of meaning; it would not be necessary to call the process of creating a *gens* 'ethnogenesis', as it would not give any insight in what the process entails.<sup>14</sup> Bowlus called Wenskus' theory a 'misleading concept', which, together with other misleading concepts, the idea of 'the Middle Ages' itself and feudalism, has led medievalists 'into an even deeper conceptual morass'.<sup>15</sup> Similar to Bowlus first remark, Andrew Gillett notes that the *Traditionskern* theory is too distant from the sources and uses homogenised texts to fit the theory, rather than look at the dynamics of individual works.<sup>16</sup> Bowlus' latter point of critique echoes the work of Patrick Geary, who argues that 'ethnicity' is a modern idea that did not exist in contemporary times as such; researching 'ethnic identity' would then be at the risk of being influenced by anachronisms.<sup>17</sup>

A logical step to overcome anachronisms would be to look into what ethnicity entailed in the early middle ages according to contemporary authors: what do medieval writers think about what made a person to be part of one *gens* and not of the other? As Geary and Walter Pohl have shown: looking at contemporary criteria is easier said than done.<sup>18</sup> The problems occur even when we try to determine the markers of ethnic difference medieval historians: what makes a *gens* different from other *gentes*? These characteristics are rarely explicitly mentioned by medieval authors and if they are mentioned, they are unusable to gain insight in ethnic identities; supposed ethnic differences were not followed, the 'real' world functioned different from the 'rules' set in literature. Geary, for instance, has shown convincingly the unreliability of the ethnic characteristics which Regino of Prüm identified: origins, customs, language and law, of which Geary writes that they are 'relatively fluid and in a sense arbitrary'.<sup>19</sup> If we take customs for instance, we see, as multiple scholars have pointed out, they were far from stable. For example, there were clean-shaven Lombards, while their ethnic identity 'prescribed' long beards, and there are accounts of high ranking 'ethnic' Franks wearing clothing ascribed to another *gens* if it suited political motives.<sup>20</sup> Similar arguments can be made for Regino's other characteristics. They initially seem like clear, or at least stable, markers, they are, however, too

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<sup>13</sup> Charles Bowlus, 'Ethnogenesis: the tyranny of a concept', in: Andrew Gillett (ed.), *On barbarian identity: critical approaches to ethnicity* (Turnhout, 2002), 241 – 256, here 242; Charles Bowlus, 'Ethnogenesis models and the age of migrations: a critique', *Austrian History Yearbook* 26 (1995), 147 – 164, here 163 – 164.

<sup>14</sup> Bowlus, 'Ethnogenesis: the tyranny', 242; Bowlus, 'Ethnogenesis models', 152.

<sup>15</sup> Bowlus, 'Ethnogenesis: the tyranny', 241 – 242.

<sup>16</sup> Andrew Gillett, 'Introduction: ethnicity, history, and methodology', in: Andrew Gillett (ed.), *On barbarian identity: critical approaches to ethnicity in the early middle ages* (Turnhout, 2002), 1 – 15, here 15.

<sup>17</sup> Geary, 'Ethnic identity', 1.

<sup>18</sup> Walter Pohl, 'Telling the difference: signs of ethnic identity', in: Walter Pohl and Helmut Reimitz (eds.), *Strategies of distinction: the construction of ethnic communities, 300 – 800* (Leiden/Boston/Cologne, 1998), 17 – 69; Geary, 'Ethnic identity'.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, 6.

<sup>20</sup> Pohl, 'Telling the difference', 64 – 65; Nelson, 'Frankish', 78; Geary, 'Ethnic identities', 7.

ambiguous to truly give insight in how an ethnic identity can be determined.<sup>21</sup> As Geary notes 'A man could speak a Romance language, dress as a Frank and claim Burgundian law'. In such a case it is impossible to verify his ethnic identity.<sup>22</sup>

We can overcome this problem by seeing ethnicity as a situational construct, according to Geary, and the only way we can look at early medieval ethnic identities, is by looking in which situations ethnic identities are appealed to.<sup>23</sup> Geary comes to the conclusion there are three main situations in which the ethnicity of a group of people might play a role. The first is when wars between different peoples occur, which we will see later with especially the Bretons. The second is in a religious context, most notably when Gregory of Tours notes that all Christians are Roman; ethnic identity and religious identity become one. The third is in a geographical context; Franks came from Francia, Burgundians from Burgundy. Geary also sees three circumstances in which individuals are identified with a certain *gens*. Firstly the status of an individual seems to play a role: if a person is part of the elite and close to the king, be it as a friend or fulfilling a job for the ruler, his ethnic background could be important. Secondly ethnicity could be mentioned when speaking of a military man, and thirdly it could be significant when a person fell out of place in a geographical or religious sense.<sup>24</sup> In some of the situations identified by Geary, ethnic identity is related to a person's other identity, or at least a different part of a person's identity. This can be explained by the layered character of identities: a person may not only be a Frank, but also a Christian, a nobleman and a Parisian.<sup>25</sup> Identities are, as Helmut Reimitz calls them, a 'toolkit' with strategies to define relationships between both groups and individuals.<sup>26</sup> Thus, it is important that in the study of ethnic identities, we do not only look at what a certain identity entails, but also at who is being identified and in what situation this occurs.

Geary's idea of ethnic identity as a fluid and situational construct ties in with a larger debate on early medieval identity and the way it functions. To a certain extent fluidity is an integral part of identity. Helmut Reimitz argues identity is not something that is created at one point and then continues to exist as established at that moment, identity constantly has to be recreated. Similarly, the act of identification was an ongoing process, subjected to the course of history, as well. This was necessary, because Reimitz, following Stuart Hall, sees identity as a means to cover up discontinuity; an appeal to identity is a way to say you have stayed the same, even though you have changed over

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<sup>21</sup> Geary, 'Ethnic identities', 6 - 9; Pohl, 'Telling the difference', 64 – 65; Nelson, 'Frankish', 78.

<sup>22</sup> Geary, 'Ethnic identities', 9.

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem, 4 and 9.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, 10-15.

<sup>25</sup> Walter Pohl, 'Introduction - strategies of identification: a methodological profile', in: Walter Pohl and Gerda Heydemann (eds.), *Strategies of identification: ethnicity and religion in the early medieval world* (Turnhout, 2013), 1 – 64, here 50.

<sup>26</sup> Reimitz, *History*, 4 – 5.



the course of time.<sup>27</sup> Not only is identity a changeable factor because it has to adapt to the flow of time, this fluidity perhaps also is due to the political nature of, especially ethnic, identities. Ethnic discourse was an important manner in which peoples could claim power, it created a vertical system in which people were set apart and some were presented as superior to others. This was possible even without knowing what exactly made 'privileged' *gentes* better than others; according to Walter Pohl, simply claiming the name of 'Franks' created this stratification.<sup>28</sup> Contrary to what is to be expected, the vertical division of *gentes* made them even less clearly distinct: ethnic identities had to be unique enough to claim privilege, yet also had to be inclusive and approachable enough so conquered peoples could participate.<sup>29</sup>

Ethnic identity and identification then not only is a construct, it also mainly is a rhetorical tool that, like any historical phenomenon, exists in a realm of communication; people that were very different from each other could be presented as part of one *gens*, whilst people that did not differ too much could be separated by ethnic discourse.<sup>30</sup> Any large scale political, ethnic or religious identity, as Pohl argues, is reliant on a high level of communication. Identity and identification is a constant negotiation between people from the in- and outgroup, on both the individual level as well as a group level; negotiations on who was part of an ethnic group, and what made and defined a certain ethnic group.<sup>31</sup> Western Europe was largely literate in the early middle ages and traces of this communication of identity have left their marks in sources.<sup>32</sup> By finding these traces of identity a modern day historian can tap into the communication of their medieval peers and through this we can create insight in the workings of ethnic identity in the (early) middle ages.

However, it should be stressed, that this ethnic communication does not necessarily focus on who is included in a certain *gens* or identity, on the contrary, these groups are often defined in terms of who does not belong to the group; the ingroup is defined by Othering, by what makes others 'the Other'. Determining who does not belong to a certain group, is essential to create group cohesion within that group.<sup>33</sup> The definitions of the 'Them' and 'Us', which are the result from this process of

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<sup>27</sup> Helmut Reimitz, *History*, 4 – 5; Stuart Hall, 'Ethnicity: identity and difference', in: Geoff Eley and Ronald Suny (eds.), *Becoming National: a Reader* (Oxford, 1996), 337 – 349, here 344.

<sup>28</sup> Andrew Gillett, 'Was ethnicity politicized in the earliest medieval kingdoms', in: Andrew Gillett (ed.), *On barbarian identity: critical approaches to ethnicity in the early middle ages* (Turnhout, 2002), 85 - 122, here 86; Walter Pohl, 'Introduction: strategies of distinction', in: Walter Pohl and Helmut Reimitz (eds.), *Strategies of distinction: the construction of ethnic communities, 300 – 800* (Leiden/Boston/Cologne, 1998), 1 – 16, here 5 – 6.

<sup>29</sup> Pohl, 'Introduction: strategies of distinction', 6.

<sup>30</sup> Ibidem, 4; Pohl, 'Telling', 21; Gillett, 'Introduction', 15; Reimitz, *History*, 5.

<sup>31</sup> Pohl, 'Introduction: strategies of identification', 49 – 51; Reimitz, *History*, 5.

<sup>32</sup> Pohl, 'Introduction: strategies of identification', 49.

<sup>33</sup> Walter Pohl and Ian Wood, 'Introduction: cultural memory and the resources of the past', in: Clemens Gantner, Rosamond McKitterick and Sven Meeder (eds.), *The resources of the past in early medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 2015), 1 – 12, here 10.

Othering, were not stable; the means to make someone 'the Other' were fluid, other peoples could be 'the Other' for different reasons at different times.<sup>34</sup> As we shall see in this thesis, the idea of the Franks as *populus Christianus* is an important concept to distinct the Bretons and Lombards from the Franks. These peoples often are placed outside of this Christian community, but the Franks are almost nowhere explicitly defined as Christians; at least not in the sources studied for this thesis. However, Frankish authors had multiple other methods to exclude the Bretons and Lombards.

There is one last question then: how can we find these methods and can the earlier mentioned traces of identity be studied? As we have seen, ethnicity, ethnic identity and identification in the early middle ages are difficult issues to examine. Ethnicity and its meaning for medieval people are vague, do not let themselves be grasped within models easily and nothing about them can be said with much certainty.<sup>35</sup> The starting point in studying ethnic identities in the early middle ages perhaps is the acknowledgement that we only can look at labels. As Robert Flierman notes in his monograph on Saxon identities the term 'Saxons' is a name put on people, but it is hard, even impossible, to determine who the historical people represented by the label were.<sup>36</sup> In Flierman's line of thought this thesis will be focussing on the associations and presentations the names 'Breton' and 'Lombard', and for the last half of the ninth century 'Beneventan', evoke, not necessarily the historical people tied to the label; although we will stray away from that path to give attention to individual people carrying and reflecting their peoples identities.

Besides Geary's idea on looking at the circumstances in which ethnicity, or an ethnic label, seems to play a role, Pohl has offered more ways in which early medieval ethnic identities can be researched in a meaningful manner. He calls for analysis on three levels. The first is discourse analysis. What was written about an ethnicity? And how was this affected by social-political contexts? According to Pohl, this has to be done for both the general idea of ethnic identity, as well as specific identities. The second level of analysis, is the analysis of the impact of ethnic organization. What were strategies of identification? How successful were they? And how much agency was attributed to ethnic groups? The last level is the role of ethnic identification for individuals and small groups.<sup>37</sup> Pohl's and Geary's research agendas will be the basis of the following study on the Breton and Lombard identities and the manner in which they are represented in Carolingian historiography from 751 to 901. We will look into how and why these people are identified in historiographical communication from an 'outsider' perspective.

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<sup>34</sup> Pohl and Wood, 'Introduction', 11.

<sup>35</sup> Gillett, 'Introduction', 18; Nelson, 'Frankish', 83.

<sup>36</sup> Flierman, *Saxon*, 6.

<sup>37</sup> Pohl, 'Introduction: strategies of identification', 26 – 27.

## The sources

To answer these questions, this thesis will limit itself to one type of source: annals. These are year-by-year accounts which tell of the events that occurred in a certain year. Regarded as dry, and perhaps boring, sources, they are often merely used as factual ‘mines’.<sup>38</sup> As we shall see, however, they are carefully crafted works of history, that are shaped by an underlying discourse and narrative.<sup>39</sup> This thesis will use five sets of annals, three of a larger size and which are connected to each other, and two smaller, largely independent, regional sets. Before we can use them, however, they need some introduction.

### The Royal Frankish Annals

The Royal Frankish Annals are a set of annals that run from 741 to 829.<sup>40</sup> Scholarship called them the *Annales Laurissenis Major*, but when Leopold von Ranke (1795 – 1886) noticed the official character of the source, he changed the name to *Annales Regni Francorum*. Von Ranke saw the strong focus on the Carolingians, the lack of disasters and the *ARF*’s authors great knowledge of political affairs, as proof for their officiality.<sup>41</sup> However, Mayke de Jong notes that the *ARF* are not as official as von Ranke assumed. She argues that although the source was written by clergy who stood close to the Carolingian court, hence the knowledge of political affairs, it was never intended to be ‘official’ history and was not commissioned by the Carolingian royal family.<sup>42</sup>

The *ARF*’s writing process largely remains elusive. Traditional scholarly viewpoints hold that the annals up until 788 draw upon earlier, smaller, annalistic works for information. However, Rosamond McKitterick revives a largely neglected thesis from Louis Halphen. He argues that the smaller annals were based of the *ARF* instead of the other way around.<sup>43</sup> McKitterick argues Halphen’s idea is more likely than the traditional stance, as there is no way to substantiate the latter and she sees

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<sup>38</sup> Sarah Foot, ‘Finding meaning of form: narrative in annals and chronicles’, in: Nancy Partner (ed.) *Writing medieval history* (London, 2005), 88 – 108, here 88.

<sup>39</sup> Foot, ‘Finding’, 102.

<sup>40</sup> The translation of the *ARF* used is: *Carolingian chronicles: Royal Frankish Annals and Nithard’s Histories*, trans. Bernhard Scholtz and Barbara Rogers (Michigan, 1970); All Latin citations from: *Die Reichsannalen mit Zusätzen aus den sog. Einhard’sannalen*, trans. Reinhold Rau, in: idem, *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* 3 parts (Berlin, 1956), I:1 – 157.

<sup>41</sup> Bernhard Scholz and Barbara Rogers, ‘Introduction’, in: *Carolingian chronicles: Royal Frankish Annals and Nithard’s Histories*, trans. Bernhard Scholz and Barbara Rogers (Michigan, 1970), 1 – 34, here 4; Rosamond McKitterick, ‘Constructing the past in the early middle ages: the case of the Royal Frankish Annals’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 7 (1997), 101 – 129, here 115 - 116.

<sup>42</sup> Mayke de Jong, ‘Karolingische annalen: tussen hofkroniek en heilshistorie’, in: René Stuijven and C. Vellekoop (eds.), *Konink en kronieken* (Hilversum, 1998), 21 – 43, here 30.

<sup>43</sup> Louis Halphen, *Etudes critiques sur l’histoire de Charlemagne* (Paris, 1921).

no reason the *ARF* would need to draw upon earlier annals.<sup>44</sup> The source seems to have been written year by year, but in stages by different, largely anonymous, authors. The first part, 741 to 793, seems to be written in the 790's by one single person. It is important to remember for later in this thesis, that this is just after the idea of the Franks as *populus Christianus* took definitive flight. Two other stages can be recognized on the basis of stylistic breaking points in the text: 793 – 807 and 807 – 829. The authors of all parts are unknown, although the years 820 to 829 have been attributed to Hilduin (ca. 775 – 855), abbot of St. Denis, which is a debatable proposition.<sup>45</sup> The text circulated widely in the Carolingian Empire and exists in five different manuscript traditions.<sup>46</sup> The most remarkable of these is the 'E'-group of manuscripts. In this group the entries for the years 741 – 812 have been revised. The revised text was bundled with the *Vita Karoli* and because of that have been attributed to Einhard, a claim that does not hold up anymore.<sup>47</sup> The revisions were not made to alter the message of the text, on the contrary, they were made to enhance it.<sup>48</sup> The Reviser boosts the righteous image of the Carolingians. He legitimizes Carolingian rule, Louis the Pious' successorship and the Carolingian/Frankish imperial rule over multiple peoples.<sup>49</sup>

Two final remarks have to be made on the content and message of the text. The first is that the text makes a connection between the Franks and Christian history, specifically Christ. This is mostly done by the counting of the years *Anno Dominus*. Although in the 21<sup>st</sup> century western world this is the common dating system, it was fairly new when the *ARF* were written and only became popular in the eighth century. Another way the source is put in a Christian framework is by mentioning the place the king celebrates Easter and Christmas.<sup>50</sup> The second remark is that the source lays strong emphasis on *gentes*. No earlier, or contemporary, source lays stresses the *gens Francorum* as much as the *ARF* does. The *gens Francorum* in this case seems to encompass everyone who is ruled by the Carolingians or Franks, implying the earlier mention idea of *populus*. These Franks are continuously opposed to other *gentes*, 37 in total, which they defeat and conquer.<sup>51</sup> As we shall see when discussing the Bretons and Lombards, the Christian element, the Frankish opposition to other *gentes* and the selling of the Frankish hegemonical message, become important factors in how these two peoples are perceived.

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<sup>44</sup> McKitterick, 'Constructing', 116.

<sup>45</sup> McKitterick, 'Constructing', 116 - 117.

<sup>46</sup> Rosamond McKitterick, 'The illusion of royal power in the Carolingian annals', *The English Historical Review* 115:460 (2000), 1 – 20, here 8.

<sup>47</sup> McKitterick, 'Constructing', 119 – 121; De Jong, *Karolingische*, 29.

<sup>48</sup> McKitterick, 'Constructing', 119 – 121.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, 124.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, 114 – 115.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*, 127 – 128.

## The Annals of St.-Bertin

The second source this thesis will be looking at are the Annals of St.-Bertin, *Annales Bertiniani*.<sup>52</sup> They start of where the *ARF* had stopped and are a direct, unbroken, continuation of the *ARF*'s narrative.<sup>53</sup> The *AB* cover the period from 830 until 882 and, although not the case for the first ten years, do have verifiable known authors, unlike most other sources used in this thesis. It has been argued the early entries were written by Archchaplain Fulco, but this proposition rests on little evidence and cannot be substantiated. However, it is possible that during this period the annals were written by multiple clergymen, with the archchaplain at the helm.<sup>54</sup>

Around 840 these anonymous annalists were succeeded by Prudentius of Troyes (d. 861). This we know because Prudentius' successor as author, Hincmar of Rheims (806 – 882), explicitly mentions this in a letter he send in 866. Originally hailing from Spain, Prudentius came to Louis the Pious' (778 – 840) court at a young age and might be one of the authors of the *AB* in the early stages of the source. From 840 onwards, after Louis' death, the empire-wide focus of the source is replaced for a more Western Frankish perspective; although Prudentius tried to incorporate information of other regions, Charles the Bald's kingdom was the main subject of interest. It is fairly certain from 843 onwards Prudentius remained the sole author of the text, as that is the year he moved to Troyes and became bishop there; from this point the *AB* lose their last remnants of being a court product and turn into a personal document.<sup>55</sup> As noted, the bishop of Troyes was succeeded by Hincmar, bishop of Rheims. This authorial change occurred after Prudentius' death in 861, perhaps in 865. The deceased bishop's possessions came into Charles the Bald's hands, amongst these properties was the manuscript of the *AB*. Hincmar copied this text and continued it as a personal project, not meant for public or royal eyes; which gave him the possibility, and perhaps confidence, to also be critical of the royal powers.<sup>56</sup>

Unlike its predecessor, the *ARF*, the *AB* have an even less official nature and are more personal histories. This is not only reflected in the movement away from court, but also in the manner it was written: not in stages, but year by year (Hincmar even added information on multiple occasions during

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<sup>52</sup> The translation of the *AB* used is: *The Annals of St.-Bertin: Ninth Century Histories, Volume I*, trans. Janet Nelson (Manchester/New York, 1991); all Latin citations from: *Jahrbücher von St. Bertin*, trans. Reinhold Rau, in: idem, *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* 3 parts (Berlin, 1956), II: 11 – 287.

<sup>53</sup> Janet Nelson, 'Introduction', in: *The Annals of St.-Bertin: Ninth Century Histories, Volume I*, trans. Janet Nelson (Manchester/New York, 1991), 1 – 20, here 5.

<sup>54</sup> Nelson, 'Introduction', 6 – 7; *Annales de Saint-Bertin*, trans. Felix Grat, Jeanne Viellard and Suzanne Clémencet (eds.), intr. Léon Levillain (Paris, 1964), vi – xii.

<sup>55</sup> Nelson, 'Introduction', 6 – 11.

<sup>56</sup> Ibidem, 9 – 12; Janet Nelson, 'The 'Annals of St. Bertin'', in: Margaret Gibson en Janet Nelson (red.), *Charles the Bald: court and kingdom* (Aldershot, 1981; reprint 1990), 23 – 40.

a year).<sup>57</sup> As we shall see, the *AB* with its western focus, will prove one of the most valuable sources for Breton identity, whilst also giving attention to Lombard, or Italian, matters.

### The Annals of Fulda

The Annals of Fulda, *Annales Fuldenses*, could be regarded as the East Frankish companion to the West Frankish *AB*; unlike its equivalent it is not a direct continuation of the *ARF*.<sup>58</sup> There are three groups of manuscripts of the *AF*. The first group contains entries covering the years 714 to 882. However, it should be noted that the Annals of Fulda are independent only from 830 onwards, before this year they draw upon earlier annals such as the *ARF*. The manuscripts from this group show some stylistic and substantive differences from the other two groups. The second manuscript 'group' consists of merely one known manuscript and continues until the year 887. In this manuscript some passages between 838 and 870 are missing. The last group of manuscripts might contain the oldest surviving manuscript of the *AF*, is the largest group and seems to be the version of the *AF* most later users have used. This third group also contains the Bavarian continuation which runs from 882 until 901, effectively rewriting the years 882 – 887 from the second manuscript group.<sup>59</sup>

Who the authors of the *AF* are, has been debated since the end of the nineteenth century. Friedrich Kurze, in 1892, held on to two notes that have been written in two manuscripts. One of these claims that the part before 838 was written by Einhard, the other that the part before 864 was written by Rudolf of Fulda (d. 865). Kurze argues that after Rudolf's death, his student Meginhard, who also finished Rudolf's *Translatio Sancti Alexandri*, continued the work on the source. In general Kurze's thesis has been accepted by subsequent scholars, however, there have been other theories as well. In 1909 Siegfried Hellman argued the *AF* were based on older compilations and written in the period 870 – 887. According to him the Bavarian continuation was written as a reaction to the extremely negative image of Charles the Bald created in the manuscripts of other two groups. The authors in his theory remain anonymous.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Nelson, 'Introduction', 13 – 15; Marlene Meyer-Gebel, 'Zur annalistischen Arbeitsweise Hinkmars von Reims', *Francia* 15 (1987), 75 – 108.

<sup>58</sup> The translation of the *AF* used is: *The Annals of Fulda: Ninth Century Histories, Volume II*, trans. Timothy Reuter (Manchester/New York, 1992); all Latin citations from: *Jahrbücher von Fulda*, trans. Reinhold Rau, in: idem, *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* 3 parts (Berlin, 1956), III: 19 – 178.

<sup>59</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'Introduction', in: *The Annals of Fulda: Ninth Century Histories, Volume II*, trans. Timothy Reuter (Manchester/New York, 1992), 1 – 14, here 2 - 4; Rosamond McKitterick, *History and memory in the Carolingian world* (Cambridge, 2004), here 34.

<sup>60</sup> Reuter, 'Introduction', 5; Friedrich Kurze, 'Über die Annales Fuldenses', *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* 17 (1892), 83 – 158; Siegfried Hellmann, 'Die Entstehung und Überlieferung der Annales Fuldenses, I', *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* 33 (1908), 697 - 742, here 701 – 717; Siegfried Hellmann, 'Die Entstehung und Überlieferung der Annales Fuldenses, II', *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* 34 (1909), 15 - 66.

Timothy Reuter, in the introduction to his translation, argues that both the scholars are wrong. They, according to Reuter, assume that the *AF* were written as one specific product, whilst he argues the source started as a bundle of single notes. Besides that Reuter criticizes Kurze's ascription of the *AF* to Einhard and Meginhard, which are based on very little evidence and about the latter very little is known anyway; in practice this does not differ to much of Hellman's 'anonymous' authors in Reuters eyes. One suggestion he does dare to make, is that a part of the *AF*, perhaps from 840 onwards, can be connected to Mainz and specifically archchancellor Liutward (d. 889). This argument is built on the, earlier mentioned, rough beating Charles the Bald receives in the entries for the years 882 - 887; precisely the years in which Liutward was fired from office.<sup>61</sup> As continuations of the *ARF*, which is the most important source for the early Carolingian reception of the Breton and Lombard identity until 843, the *AB* and the *AF* will be the backbone of this thesis when we deal with the years after the Treaty of Verdun.

#### The Annals of St. Vaast and Xanten

The Annals of St. Vaast, *Annales Vedastini*, and Annals of Xanten, *Annales Xantenses*, are smaller annals as the other three sets.<sup>62</sup> Being of a more local character, they evidently deal less with the Bretons and Lombards. However, as we shall see, both sets give some interesting insights into the respective identities; which perhaps are due to these sources not being directly tied to the court or higher politics and therefore giving a more independent viewpoint.

The *AV* initially started as an excerpt of the *AB*, enriched with regional notes by an unknown clergyman from the Monastery of St. Vaast. Like the *AB*, the *AV* for a large part deals with Viking attacks. The *AV* are known from two manuscripts wherein the Annals are in a bundle with other historical works: Bede's *Chronicon de sex huius saeculi aetatibus* (part of *De temporum ratione*) and the *Annales Laurissenses minores*. However, these versions have been overhauled linguistically. The original text has largely been reconstructed, which was possible, because it was copied in the *Annales Lobienses* and the *Chronicon Vedastinum* (although it cannot be proven these are fully unaltered versions of the original as well).<sup>63</sup>

The *AX* are named after Xanten, because it mentions the city's destruction in 864, recorded by an eyewitness. This, however, does not mean they were actually written there. The probable author

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<sup>61</sup> Reuter, 'Introduction', 7 – 9.

<sup>62</sup> The translations and Latin citations from the *AV* and the *AX* used are: *Jahrbücher von St. Vaast*, trans. Reinhold Rau, in: idem, *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* 3 parts (Berlin, 1956), II: 289 – 338; *Xantener Jahrbücher*, trans. Reinhold Rau, in: idem, *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte* 3 parts (Berlin, 1956), II: 339 – 372.

<sup>63</sup> Reinhold Rau, 'Einleitung', in: Reinhold Rau, *Quellen zur Karolingische Reichsgeschichte*, 3 parts, (Berlin, 1956), II: 1 – 10, here 6 – 7.

of the first parts of the work, Gerward, was a cleric at Lorsch and court librarian of Louis the Pious. For the part covering the period 790 to 829 he used older annals and he wrote his annals in a concise manner, from 830 onwards the AX continue independently. After Gerward's death in 860 the work was not continued immediately, this was done after 870 by an unknown author. Gerward was loyal to Lothar and mainly interested in Frisia's fate. The continuator, however, was loyal to Louis the German and more interested in the region of Cologne and Westphalia. Not only is the continuator from Cologne loyal to another ruler, according to Reinhold Rau he also is less perfectionist in the chronology and uses more biblical imagery than Gerward. Since the AX are not known from contemporary manuscripts, additions and uses by later medieval historians cannot be proven.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Rau, 'Einleitung', 8 – 10; See also: Heinz Löwe, 'Studien zu den Annales Xantenses', *Deutsches Archiv für die Erforschung des Mittelalters* 8 (1950) 59 - 99.



## Chapter 1: Breton and Lombard identities before 843

Carolingian historiography is not the first time the Bretons and Lombards appear in history. Before we turn to the Carolingian sources, it would be wise to briefly look into what is written about these peoples prior to their appearance in these works. The pre-Carolingian relationship between the Franks and these peoples will shortly be attested as well.

Due to a lack of sources, the early history of Brittany remains elusive. During Roman occupation it was part of a region called *Armorica*, but due to migration from the British Isles the name changed to *Britannia*. When this exactly happened is unsure, what can be said, however, is that the name '*Britannia*' became the standard name for the area in the second half of the sixth century. Gregory of Tours (ca. 538 – 594) uses this term as well in his *Historia Francorum*, in which he also gives the first meaningful account of the Bretons. Like all early medieval authors, Gregory presented the inhabitants of Brittany as one single *gens*, not differentiating between the Gallo-Romans on the peninsula and the Breton settlers. In Gregory's eyes this people was already subdued by Clovis (ca. 482 – 511). However, the Bretons were not accepting Frankish domination and often rebelled against the Merovingian kings. This antagonistic relationship between the two peoples would continue throughout the centuries to come. From Gregory we also learn Brittany was governed through multiple small hereditary kingdoms.<sup>65</sup>

After Gregory of Tours' *History* the Bretons again largely disappear from the sources, only to return in the second half of the eighth century, when they clash with the Carolingians.<sup>66</sup> The political situation on the Breton peninsula when the Carolingians invaded remains obscure. Possibly the region, as in earlier times, was divided in multiple kingdoms. However, evidence for this thesis is scarce. Similarly, the exact reasons for the Carolingian attacks on Brittany are unknown. The Carolingians started invading Brittany around 751 when Pepin the Short took Vannes and arose from defensive and strategic motives, to stop Aquitanian rebels from gaining Breton support, or ideological claims of Carolingian hegemony copying the earlier Merovingian domination of the region.<sup>67</sup> Eventually the Carolingians would subdue the Bretons in 799, as we shall see, however, like the Merovingians the Bretons would prove to be a continuous nuisance for the Carolingians.

Pre-Carolingian Lombard history is quite different from that of the Bretons, perhaps the only similarity is that both peoples do not seem to come from the region the Carolingians encounter them in. Tacitus (56 – 117) was the first to record the Lombards and places them on the Lower Elbe. In the early sixth century they settle in the former Roman province of Pannonia and from there they go to

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<sup>65</sup> Julia Smith, *Province and empire: Brittany and the Carolingians* (Cambridge, 1992), 10 – 22.

<sup>66</sup> Caroline Brett, 'Brittany and the Carolingian empire: a historical review', *History Compass* 11:4 (2013), 268 – 279, here 269.

<sup>67</sup> Brett, 'Brittany', 270.

Italy around 569. In Italy they establish duchies and from 605 onwards start to centralize the state.<sup>68</sup> It is unnecessary for this thesis to fully explain the political developments and their details in seventh century Lombardy. It should be noted, however, that the central power in Pavia, from circa 620 onwards the most important city of the kingdom, was continuously contested; as Chris Wickham notes, there have been ten or eleven successful coups. This could be seen as a weakness of the Lombard state, but as Wickham argues, it can also be a strength. Lombard dukes were not rebelling for independence of their respective duchies, but for the crown and reign over all of the kingdom, in the process reinforcing Lombard unity.<sup>69</sup>

In this unified kingdom a Lombard identity was established. Although the Lombards took over Roman language, Roman ideas on administration and statecraft, and combined Roman and Lombard law, they also promoted their own history and identity.<sup>70</sup> Walter Pohl, working with the ethnogenesis theory, argues there are three stages in which Lombard memory was created. The first starts around 600 when a, now lost, history of the Lombards was written. The second stage commences in 643 when Rothari (ca. 606 – 652) issues an edict that includes a list of Lombard kings. Twenty to thirty years later, although possibly at the same time, the *Origo gentis Langobardum* was finished which told Lombard history from the origin story to the present. The last, and decisive stage, is the writing of Paul the Deacon's (ca. 720 – 799) *Historia Langobardum*, written not long after the Carolingian conquest. Paul moulds different views of Lombard history into one, reconciling supposed contradictions, for instance the pagan and Christian past.<sup>71</sup> We will see later, when discussing Carolingian historiography, that from the Frankish viewpoint Lombard identity seems to disappear as the ninth century progresses; as we shall see, this disappearance came forth out of a deliberate neglect of the identity by Frankish authors. However, from the Lombardic perspective the need for Lombard identity became stronger as they lost their independence; there was a need to have a parallel identity next to the identity of their powerful neighbours and overlords, the Carolingians.<sup>72</sup>

The Bretons and Lombards, then, were two rather different peoples, at least as far as we can tell from the sources. When Charlemagne (742 – 814) conquered the Lombards in 774, they already had a unified and centralized state with working political institutions, the Lombards had their own identity and an established history. Although a lack of sources clouds our knowledge of the Bretons before they appear in Carolingian sources, from a political perspective this people seems to have been

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<sup>68</sup> Chris Wickham, *Early medieval Italy: central power and local society 400 – 1000* (London/Basingstoke, 1981), 29 – 34.

<sup>69</sup> Wickham, *Early medieval*, 37 - 38.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibidem*, 68 – 70.

<sup>71</sup> Walter Pohl, 'Memory, identity and power in Lombard Italy', in: Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes (eds.), *The uses of the past in the early middle ages* (Cambridge, 2000), 9 – 28, here 17 – 20.

<sup>72</sup> Pohl, 'Memory', 20 – 21.

less unified and organized. This difference between the Bretons and Lombards, have had their effect on the way the Carolingians dealt with them and, as we shall see, on the way Carolingian authors represented them.

### Antagonists of the Christian community

Markers of identity as formulated by Regino of Prüm receive little to no attention in the annals studied for this thesis. For instance, that the Bretons spoke a different language, which the Franks must have noticed, is not mentioned anywhere. As we shall see the representation of both the Bretons and the Lombards identities and the manner in which they are othered, is a lot more indirect. Before 843 both peoples are often ascribed a similar role: as antagonists of the Christian community. However, the manner in which this is manifested in the sources differs.

### Bretons against the *populus Christianus*

The Bretons first appear in the *ARF*'s entry for 786. Charlemagne sends his seneschal Audulf to Brittany with an army. Audulf overcomes the many fortifications the Bretons had constructed, defeats the Breton people and returns home 'by God's will'. The report in the original text of the *ARF* is a rather 'standard' narrative of a Frankish victory, however, the Reviser enlightens us with a small account of where the Bretons came from. He describes the above-mentioned migration of the Bretons from Britain, due to the invasion of the Angles and Saxons, and how these refugees settled 'at the extreme end of Gaul' around Vannes and Corseul. As noted earlier, the Reviser tries to advocate Carolingian hegemony. It is with this goal that he also informs us on the reason Charlemagne wanted to invade Brittany. The Bretons, which the Reviser also refers to as 'this people', had been 'subjugated by the kings of the Franks' and had been paying tribute and taxes, unwillingly as the annalist mentions.<sup>73</sup> However, the Bretons now refused to do this and Audulf swiftly broke the 'treacherous tribe's' 'arrogance'.<sup>74</sup> This account of the year 786 is illustrative for the manner in which the Bretons would be treated by the Carolingian authors until at least 843, when the representation of the Bretons becomes more varied. The entry places the Bretons outside of the, by God favoured, Christian community of the Franks. The tribal Bretons defy the order of the world by refusing to pay tribute to their, rightful, overlords. These negative characteristics are presented as inheritable: they are attributed to 'this'

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<sup>73</sup> *'Is populus a regibus Francorum subactus ac tributarius factus ipositum sibi vectigal licet invictus solver solebat'* *ARF*, s.a. 786.

<sup>74</sup> *'Cumque eo tempore dicto audiens non esset, missus illuc regiae mensae praepositus Audulfus perfidae gentis contumaciam mira celeritate compressit regique apud Wormaciam et obsides, quos acceperat, et complures ex populi primoribus adduxit'*, *ARF*, s.a. 786.

people, implying the whole of the 'Breton people' regardless of time; it does not refer specifically to the rebels.

The account of 786 in the *ARF* should be seen in the context of the Carolingian identity and self-perception as *populus Christianus*. The treachery of the Bretons makes them less favoured by God, as opposed to the Franks who are victorious because of God. However, this account is not the only time the Bretons are accused of treachery; up until 843 the Bretons are mentioned almost exclusively with regard to revolts. In 824 Louis the Pious launches a grand scale campaign against the Bretons. Three armies ravished the province for forty days, it was a rather hard punishment for what the author of the *ARF* calls the 'faithless' Bretons (*'perfidio Brittonum populo'*). What this faithlessness entailed is not mentioned in this entry, it thus is a 'general' accusation and implied to be inherent.<sup>75</sup> Next year's entry gives more insight in what exactly enraged the Franks. It is revealed only one Breton is to be blamed for the invasion: Wihomarc (d. 825). By his treachery, what treachery still is not mentioned, the whole province was 'thrown into confusion' (*'qui perfidia sua et totam Britanniam conturbaverat'*) and his 'senseless obstinacy' (*'obstinatione stultissima'*) was what provoked the Emperor. However, he now wanted to subject himself to that same Emperor, 'following saner counsel' (*'saniore usus consilio'*) as the annalist notes. Louis forgives Wihomarc and allows him to return to Brittany.<sup>76</sup> It would have been 'all's well that ends well' if he would not have 'broken faith' with 'the treachery peculiar to his nation, as he had before'.<sup>77</sup> For two years in a row, although regarding the same conflict, Bretons are presented as inherently treacherous; it even is a special feature of their character.

However, this treacherous behaviour is not as peculiar to the Bretons as the annalist presents them to be in the entry for 825. Einhard blames Saxon infidelity for dragging out Charlemagne's Saxon Wars for three decades and the Royal Frankish annalists accuse the Saxons of inherent treachery as well.<sup>78</sup> However, the Bretons and the Saxons hardly were the only peoples to be accused of *perfidia*, infidelity. As Robert Flierman shows in his monograph, it was a much-used allegation directed to both individuals, as well as groups, on the periphery of the Empire; for Carolingian historians it was a standard rhetorical tool.<sup>79</sup> As was the case with Carolingian views on ethnography, their ideas on fidelity, and moreover infidelity, are rooted in both Roman, as well as (early) Christian traditions. In Roman literature *fides* was presented as being the essence of Romanes, and *perfidia* was something belonging to other peoples, such as the Carthaginians; in Christian tradition *perfidia* came to mean

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<sup>75</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 824.

<sup>76</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 825.

<sup>77</sup> *'Cui cum imperator et ignosceret et muneribus donatum una cum caeteris gentis suae primoribus domum remaere permetteret, promissam fidem, ut prius consequeretur, gentilicia perfidia commutavit ac vicinos suos incendiis et direptionibus, in quantum potuit, infestare non cessans, donec ab hominibus Lantberti comitis in domo propria circumventus atque interfectus est'*, *ARF*, s.a. 825.

<sup>78</sup> Flierman, *Saxon*, 92; *ARF*, s.a. 775 and 795.

<sup>79</sup> Flierman, *Saxon*, 93 and n. 19.

unbelieve, drifting from the right Christian dogma. In the ideology of Christian kingship the Carolingians had crafted for themselves, disloyalty to them became synonymous with disloyalty to God.<sup>80</sup> The continuous accusations of treachery by the Bretons, then, do not only portray them as enemies of the Franks, but, perhaps more importantly, place them outside of the Christian community; on the same level as the pagan Saxons or the Muslim Saracens.

Frankish accusations of treachery are hard to prove, especially since it is a rhetorical tool: claiming infidelity from other people was a convenient way to legitimize Frankish aggression. Nearly all campaigns the Franks fought are justified by accusations of betrayal.<sup>81</sup> It makes sense, then, that the details of what Wihomarc's obstinacy and treachery precisely entailed are not revealed by the annalists; it simply did not matter for the message the author tried to convey, that the Franks have a good reason to attack Brittany. Another reason for emphasizing Breton infidelity could be that Carolingian historians did not realise 'the Bretons' were not as united as they thought they were, or as united as they wanted to present them. Again we can compare them to the Saxons. Carolingian authors portrayed the Saxon Wars as being wars against one united *gens Saxonum*. However, the Saxons were divided peoples, even larger groups, such as the East- and Westphalians, were smaller Saxon entities forced together by Frankish pressure. This disunity made the Saxons hard to conquer, however, the Saxon '*gens*' was portrayed as the same kind of people as the Franks: one people united by faith and loyalty; thus *perfidia* was to be blamed for the hardships the Carolingians had in subduing them.<sup>82</sup> Similarly, only under Carolingian pressure the Bretons created a unified identity, that could exist next to the Frankish, initially this unity did not exist.<sup>83</sup> Perhaps the accusation of treachery is a means to cover up that the Carolingians did not have a tight control over all Bretons. It is as Richard Broome mentions: "certain peoples – those who had proven most difficult to conquer or to integrate – were seen as inherently rebellious".<sup>84</sup>

However, the above described 'unification' of the Bretons and their identity, real or perceived, brought about another tool to the Frankish historian's toolkit. With the Bretons, or at least their rebellions, led by one person, treachery and infidelity could now be ascribed to this person; not all Bretons had to be identified as showing *perfidia*. In the end it was the goal of the Franks to welcome conquered peoples into their own community, their *populus Christianus*. If a whole *gens* was deemed perfidious, they could never be integrated fully. According to Broome, blaming their leader for being

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<sup>80</sup> Ibidem, 101 – 103.

<sup>81</sup> Ibidem, 103.

<sup>82</sup> Ibidem, 100.

<sup>83</sup> Reimitz, *History, Frankish*, 440; Smith, *Province*, 70 – 74.

<sup>84</sup> Richard Broome, 'Pagans, rebels and Merovingians: otherness in the early Carolingian world' in: Clemens Gantner, Rosamond McKitterick and Sven Meeder (eds.), *The resources of the past in early medieval Europe* (Cambridge, 2015), 155 – 171, here 161 – 162.

treacherous and leading his people astray, could relieve some of this tension and make integration theoretically possible if the leader was death.<sup>85</sup> In Carolingian annals 'sole rulers' of Brittany become omnipresent after the Treaty of Verdun, when Nominoë (ca. 780 – 851) and his successors are installed to rule Brittany in name of the Carolingians.<sup>86</sup> Before that period, however, we see only two named Breton rebels occur in the *ARF*: Morman (d. 818) and Wihomarc, other Breton leaders, such as Nominoë, do not appear until after 843. In 818 Morman defies Carolingian rule and claims royal authority for himself. He was defeated and after he was killed no Breton dared to be disobedient towards Louis anymore, at least not until Wihomarc's rebellion.<sup>87</sup> In the case of the Bretons, Broome's theory remains largely just theory. Morman's defeat and the manner in which it is described, hardly is a warm invitation to join the Frankish community; it is a forceful integration based on fear. Wihomarc's rebellion as well shows that blaming one single man for a rebellion, does not exclude ethnic *perfidia*, or smooths integration; Wihomarc's story combines the individual, with the collective form of infidelity. Sure, Wihomarc is blamed for the initial chaos in Brittany, but his eventual treachery is blamed on him being a Breton, and unfaithfulness was their peculiarity.<sup>88</sup>

In the period between the first mention of the Bretons in the *ARF*'s entry for 786 and 843 we get few explicit hints at the Breton identity. From the Reviser, writing shortly after Charlemagne's death, we learn the Bretons are a people who fled from the Angles and, Charlemagne's arch enemies, the Saxons in Britain. They are a *gens* that initially do not seem to have had single leadership; this somewhat dissolves when named rebel leaders start to occur in the sources. The main characteristic ascribed to the Bretons by the Royal Frankish annalists and Reviser, seems to be that they are inherently treacherous, they defy rightful, and apparently longstanding, Frankish rule over the region. However, it could be argued that this *perfidia* is not 'Breton' identity, it is a 'non-Frankish' identity which we also see being used as 'Saxon' identity. The Bretons are opposed to the Frankish identity as the *populus Dei*, through which the Bretons are placed outside of the Frankish Christian community that is favoured by God. This form of Othering is quite literally applied by the poet Ermold the Black, who wrote that the Bretons are "lying, proud, rebellious, lacking in goodness, Christian in name only".<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Broome, 'Pagans', 162.

<sup>86</sup> Even though Nominoë already was installed as count of Vannes in 831, a title he might even have had earlier. See: Hérold Pettiau, 'A prosopography of Breton rulership, A.D. 818 – 952', *The Journal of Celtic Studies* 4 (2004), 171 – 191, here, 179.

<sup>87</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 818.

<sup>88</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 825.

<sup>89</sup> Smith, *Province*, 63.

## Lombards against Saint Peter

The Bretons, with their treacherous behaviour, are opposed to the Frankish *populus Christianus*, the Lombards are placed outside of the Christian community of the Franks by presenting them as enemies of the pope. As we read in the *ARF*, Pope Stephen II (714 – 757) goes to Francia to ask for support and aid ‘for the rights of St. Peter’ (*pro iustitiis sancti Petri*) in 753; at the same time Carloman (d. 754), Pepin’s brother who in 746 became monk at Monte Cassino, is ordered by his abbot to go to Francia to prevent this aid from being given.<sup>90</sup> It is a rather short account and does not give information on why the pope has need for support, this information is given by the Reviser. According to the Reviser the pope needed aid to defend himself, implying that the Lombards were a personal threat to him, and the Roman church against the aggression of the Lombards. Not only did the Lombards take an aggressive stance against the pope, Carloman’s mission to prevent Frankish interference was also due to their meddling. Carloman, according to the Reviser, did not go to Francia willingly, he did this because he did not want to defy his abbot’s orders. However, Carloman’s abbot, in turn, was ordered by the Lombards to send his subordinate, and the abbot did not dare to defy the command of the Lombard king, Aistulf (d. 756).<sup>91</sup> The Reviser’s additions to the entry present the Lombards as an aggressive people using any means necessary to destroy the Roman Church. They do not shy away of trying to influence diplomatic meetings and setting up two brothers against each other. The Reviser does this, because the goal of his work is to emphasize Carolingian righteousness and legitimize their rule. The personal threat against the pope, and the removal of that threat by Pepin two years later, create a bond between the papacy and the Carolingian family; the pope is presented as indebted, as well as dependent, on the Frankish royal family. The Reviser, then, uses the Lombard threat as a means to present the Carolingians as protectors of the Church.

This narrative, presenting the Carolingian’s as protector of the Church, continues into the *ARF*’s entry for 753. Pepin is by the pope anointed as king, according to the Reviser this is done after Pepin swore to protect the Roman Church.<sup>92</sup> In 755 he adds action to his words and marches his army into Italy. According to the *ARF*, the goal of this campaign was to ‘seek justice for the blessed apostle Peter’ (*iustitiam beati Petri apostoli quaerendo*), a justice refused by the Lombards who launch a countercampaign.<sup>93</sup> The Lombardic offensive is written to be directed against ‘King Pepin and the Franks’, implying the Lombards are not only are the enemies of the king, but also the Frankish people. After emphasizing that the Lombards were the ones who started the war, the annalist reveals Pepin and the Franks were victorious with God’s help and the intervention of Saint Peter. Later Pepin

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<sup>90</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 753.

<sup>91</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 753.

<sup>92</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 754.

<sup>93</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 755.

surrounds Pavia, where Aistulf is holding up, and forces the Lombard king to surrender and promise to respect the rights of Saint Peter.<sup>94</sup> This scene repeats itself one year later, Aistulf does not keep his oaths and defies Saint Peter's rights. He is again forced to surrender to Pepin in Pavia and makes the same promises as the year before. In addition Pepin conquers Ravenna and the Pentapolis from the Lombards and returns these regions to 'Saint Peter', the Pope. The 'godless' (or 'villainous') King Aistulf cannot contain himself and later in 756 he again forsakes his oaths, this time he is not punished by the Franks, but by God himself and dies due to a disease he contracted from a hunting accident.<sup>95</sup>

The *ARF*, especially with the additions made by the Reviser, thus present Pepin as the saviour of the Church. It fits the idea of the Franks as *populus Dei* ruled by the Carolingians that took flight in the years prior to 793, when this part of the *ARF* was written. The frictions between the Lombards and the Papacy in the 750's were the perfect situation to set up the narrative of the Franks as the *populus Dei*; the pope and the Carolingian kings are presented to have had a good relationship from the beginning. The Carolingians were acknowledged as rightful rulers by the Pope because they defended the Church against the Lombards, who are set up as enemies of the Church. The manner in which the events of the years 753 until 756, and especially the supposed treacherous behaviour of the Lombards, are described, arrange a scene in which the Frankish, or perhaps the Carolingian, identity can flourish; it is clearly not about the Lombards who play a supporting role and whose treachery is a set piece to the grand narrative.

Charlemagne's conquest of the kingdom of Lombardy almost twenty years later is presented in the same narrative. In 773 Desiderius (d. ca. 786), Aistulf's successor, is putting pressure on the Pope again. An envoy is sent to Charlemagne by Pope Hadrian, again the *ARF* stress that the Pope is a successor of Saint Peter, to ask for help. The king and his Franks are requested to aid 'the Church against King Desiderius and the Lombards for the sake of God's service and the rights of St. Peter'.<sup>96</sup> Charlemagne consulted with the Franks how to react to this request and it was decided they would comply with the Pope's request. Attempts to come to a diplomatic solution are neglected by the annalist who immediately skips ahead to the military solution in his narrative. With God's help and Saint Peter's intervention the Franks pass over the Alps safely and are able to besiege Pavia. During his stay in Italy the Saxons attack Frankish lands north of the Alps, however, it is emphasized yet again that Charlemagne was in Italy to defend God's Church at the invitation of the Pope.<sup>97</sup> The Saxon attack has a rhetorical consequence as well, they are described plundering, burning houses and attempting

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<sup>94</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 755.

<sup>95</sup> Scholtz and Rogers translate '*Haistulfus nefandus rex*' as 'the villainous king Aistulf', whilst Rau translates it to 'Aistulf, der gottlose König'. *ARF*, s.a. 756.

<sup>96</sup> '*pro Dei servitio et iustitia sancti Petri seu solatio ecclesiae super Desiderium regem et Langobardos*', *ARF*, s.a. 773.

<sup>97</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 773.



to set a church on fire, which ultimately fails after divine intervention.<sup>98</sup> The Lombards are placed in line with these plundering pagans and the description of the Saxons' attack could function as a warning for what could have happened to the Papal State if Charlemagne did not intervene. The definitive conquest of the Lombards in 774 is briefly treated in the *ARF*. Charlemagne captures Pavia and Desiderius, and subsequently every city of Italy submitted to his rule. He returns to Francia by 'God's help' and sends armies into Saxony, who, again by 'God's help' were victorious.<sup>99</sup>

Unlike the Bretons, the *ARF* does not present the Lombards as inherently treacherous after they have been subjugated. The only Lombard revolt between 774 and 843 that is attributed to the Lombards, is Hrodgaud's rebellion which starts in 775, one year after the conquest of the kingdom. Hrodgaud (d. 776), duke of Friuli, did not keep faith and broke his oaths to the Franks. Together with the dukes Arighis of Benevento, Hildebrand of Spoleto (d. 789) and Reginbald of Chiusi, Hrodgaud tries to take Rome and restore the Lombard Kingdom; a plan they had made with Adalgis (d. 788), son of Desiderius, who was supposed to return from his exile in the Byzantine Empire, taking a Greek army with him. However, the rebellion was far from successful as Charlemagne marched into the Italian peninsula, and defeated and killed Hrodgaud. According to the annalist, Charlemagne placed the revolting cities under Frankish command.<sup>100</sup> This was a very slow process and Charlemagne did not prioritise the replacement of Lombard dukes too much.<sup>101</sup> For instance, in 787 Arighis, who revolted with Hrodgaud, was still Duke of Benevento. However, he cannot expect a very gentle treatment by the annalist. In 786 Charlemagne wants to expand his Italian territory, but Arighis does not dare to face him. The Duke sends his son to Charlemagne, at that moment on audience at the Pope, to ask the King not to come to Benevento; Arighis was willing to comply to all the King's wishes. Charlemagne distrusts Arighis whom he believes will not keep his promise. Charlemagne goes to Benevento to see Arighis, but out of fear the duke flees to Salerno. From there he sends hostages, amongst which were his sons, and presents. Charlemagne then decides Benevento will be spared of destruction and the Beneventans all take oaths.<sup>102</sup> Individual dukes are presented as treacherous, with Arighis not only being unfaithful, but also being depicted as a coward. The Lombards as a people, unlike the Bretons and the Saxons, are not inherently perfidious. This fits the trend we saw with the Bretons Morman and Wihomarc; accusing a whole people of *perfidia* complicates their integration within the Carolingian Empire, thus the dukes are used as scapegoat.

Lombard identity before the conquest by Charlemagne consists mainly of them being enemies of the Pope, representing Saint Peter, and the Church. However, this view is mainly propagated in

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<sup>98</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 773..

<sup>99</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 774.

<sup>100</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 775; *Royal Frankish Annals*, trans. Scholz and Rogers, 184 n. 11.

<sup>101</sup> Wickham, *Early medieval*, 48 - 49

<sup>102</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 787.

order to set up the Carolingians as the saviours of the Church, leaders of God's favourites; the frictions between the Lombards and the Pope proved to be a convenient situation to propagate the Carolingian identity. Perhaps Ermold the Black's remark that the Bretons were 'Christian in name only', could also be applied to the Lombards during this period. However, except for Hrodgaud's revolt, the Lombards would play a more positive role after subjugation.

### Lombard allies and the disappearance of *gentes*

After their defeat the Lombards are mostly put into a positive light when they are discussed in the *ARF*. To a certain extent, they are even presented as being part of the *gens Francorum*. When in 778 Charlemagne marches against the Saracens and the Basques in Spain, his army does not only consist of Franks. The annalist makes a point of telling where Charlemagne's men on this campaign came from: Burgundy, Austrasia, Bavaria, the Provence, Septimania, 'and a part of the Lombards'.<sup>103</sup> Walter Pohl stated that a person was part of a *gens* as long as that person was directly participating in that *gens* affairs.<sup>104</sup> Following this line it could be argued that the Lombards, now fighting Frankish wars, are presented as part of the *gens Francorum*, or perhaps better: the *populus Christianus*, the overarching Christian community the Franks propagate. We see for instance that not only Lombards fight in Frankish wars, but Franks also fight in conflicts of the Lombards. In 788 the Lombards, specifically duke Hildebrand of Spoleto and duke Grimoald III of Benevento (d. 806), are involved in a war with the 'Greeks', who apparently still were trying to retrieve the Lombard Kingdom for Adalgis, son of Desiderius. Charlemagne sends his emissary Winigis with some Franks to oversee the situation. Together the Lombards and the Franks defeat the Greeks 'with the help of God'. The Lord's favouritism is further strengthened by the succession of three other wars the Franks fought in 788 and, according to the annalist, win with God's help.<sup>105</sup> The Frankish and Lombard *regna* are still perceived as independent states, who both have their own wars to fight. However, they fall under the same ruler, the same Christian community and support each other in their respective wars.

The bond between the two peoples does not only come to fruition on the battlefield. The Reviser writes about a rebellion in 792. Pepin (ca. 769 – 811), Charlemagne's oldest son, and some unnamed Franks are displeased with Queen Fastrada's (765 – 794) behaviour and plotted to murder the king. This was brought to light by Fardulf (d. 806), a Lombard, who was rewarded with the

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<sup>103</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 778.

<sup>104</sup> Walter Pohl, 'Introduction: strategies of distinction', in: Walter Pohl and Helmut Reimitz (eds.), *Strategies of distinction: the construction of ethnic communities, 300 – 800* (Leiden/Boston/Cologne, 1998), 1 – 16, here 4.

<sup>105</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 788; Grimoald was the son of Arighis, who died in 787, and Charlemagne initially did not want to make Grimoald duke of Benevento, as he had agreed to with the Pope. However, after Grimoald promised the Lombards would get rid of their beards and mention Charles' name on coins and charters, he did become duke. See: *Royal Frankish Annals*, trans. Scholz and Rogers, 188 n. 3.

monastery of St.-Denis for keeping faith.<sup>106</sup> Not only do we see the importance of 'faith', *fides*, in Carolingian politics; loyalty is rewarded. Moreover, through Pepin's rebellion and Fardulf's fidelity we again see that untrustworthiness is not an inherent characteristic of the Lombards. After the events of 792 the Lombards largely disappear from the *ARF*. 'Lombard' is only used one more time as an ethnic marker. In 811 an envoy is sent to Constantinople. The goal of this mission was to ratify peace between Charlemagne and Emperor Nicephorus. The envoy consists of people of different heritage and among them is the Lombard Aio of Friuli.<sup>107</sup> A meeting to secure peace between two of the greatest political powers at the time is no small matter and it is, yet again, a sign of great trust that a Lombard is part of such an undertaking. As a place marker 'Lombardy' is only mentioned one more time, in 804, when it is rumoured the blood of Christ has been found in Mantua. The Pope goes there to investigate the situation, but it is not revealed if this rumour is true.<sup>108</sup>

From 792 onwards events, and people, on the Italian peninsula are connected to the city or region, not an ethnicity. Studying Lombard identity after this year becomes difficult. However, some dukes still are Lombard, especially in Benevento, which would remain an independent Lombard duchy until the eleventh century.<sup>109</sup> The Beneventan dukes prove to be a similar, although a lesser, nuisance to the Carolingians as the Bretons. In 801 an army, under leadership of Pepin, is sent to Benevento; the reason, and conclusion, for this campaign is not revealed.<sup>110</sup> In 802 duke Grimoald IV (d. 817) besieges Lucera and captures duke Winigis of Spoleto, the man that helped Grimoald III against the Greeks in 788. Winigis was set free in 803.<sup>111</sup> Ten years later, in 812, peace would commence between Charlemagne and Grimoald; the Beneventans paid twenty-five thousand solidi as tribute.<sup>112</sup> From the perspective of identity little can be said on basis of the brief descriptions of the quarrels between the Beneventans and those who were loyal to the Carolingians. However, it does show that, if it came to the Lombards, Lombard subjugation was not necessarily definitive and that there still was a movement that defied Carolingian rulership. We will go more in depth on the Beneventans in the next chapter.

Multiple reasons can be given for the, sudden, disappearance of the Lombards from the *ARF*. The first is that around 793 an authorial change occurred and the new annalist perhaps did not see the need to present the Lombards as a distinct peoples. The second explanation is that the Lombards were integrated in the Frankish community, or, as seen above, were presented as such. The Lombards did not oppose their integration in the Carolingian Empire anymore, they did not rebel; the reason to

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<sup>106</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 792.

<sup>107</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 811.

<sup>108</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 804.

<sup>109</sup> Wickham, *Early medieval*, 48 – 49.

<sup>110</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 801.

<sup>111</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 802 and 803.

<sup>112</sup> *ARF*, s.a. 812.

mention them as people was taken away. However, the Lombards do not only disappear from the *ARF*, they also are not present in other sources. In the annals studied for this thesis they only appear three more times, which we will see in the next chapter.<sup>113</sup> As we shall see then, the neglect of the Lombards was a deliberate choice of the annalists. The Lombard history of the Kingdom of Italy was purposefully neglected and perhaps even subject to some form of *damnatio memoriae*. One of the ways this was done, was by referring to Pepin (773 – 810) and Louis II the Younger (d. 882) as being ‘King of Italy’, whilst their official title was ‘King of the Lombards’.<sup>114</sup>

The earlier described Lombard allies from the *ARF*, Aio, Fardulf and the Lombard army, seem to be an exception to this neglect; their Lombard origins are important to mention. This can be explained from the idea of empire Charlemagne and the aim of the *ARF*. One of the goals of the *ARF* was emphasizing Carolingian hegemony and *imperium*, the rule over multiple people. In this light the *ARF* do not only tell about clashes between *gentes*, but also emphasize the diversity of Charlemagne’s court; this diversity was to emphasize *imperium*, the essence of an empire.<sup>115</sup> The emphasize on Aio, Fardulf and a part of the army being Lombard, then, becomes a manner to show the diversity of the Carolingian Empire and its military; it gives Charlemagne prestige and shows he was an emperor, and not a mere king. By the identification as ‘Lombards’ these men are Othered, however, this Othering is aimed at showing they are part of the Frankish community and that this community is multi-ethnic.

The representation of the Breton and Lombard identities before 843 prove to be similar, yet distinct. Similar in the sense that both are placed outside of the Christian community of the Franks. However, the manner in which they play this role differs; the treacherous Bretons are opposed to the *populus Christianus*, whilst the Lombards are opposed to the pope. The Lombards would eventually escape this anti-papal role and become part of the Frankish community. This becomes clear by the political and military role they started playing after conquest, and to a certain extent also by their disappearance from the sources. It should be remembered, however, that both the negative, as well as the positive, representations of these peoples, mainly are constructed with the aim to promote Carolingian rule and *imperium*.

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<sup>113</sup> *AF*, s.a. 879; *AB*, s.a. 879; *AF*, s.a. 882.

<sup>114</sup> Paolo Delogu, ‘Lombard and Carolingian Italy’, in: Rosamond McKitterick (ed.), *The new Cambridge medieval history*, 7 parts (Cambridge, 1995), II: 290 – 319, here 306.

<sup>115</sup> Sven Meeder, ‘Irish scholars and Carolingian learning’, in Roy Flechner and Sven Meeder (eds.), *The Irish in early medieval Europe: identity, culture and religion* (London, 2016), 179 – 195, here 182 – 183.

## Chapter 2: The Breton and Lombard identities after 843

After the Treaty of Verdun the Carolingian Empire was divided into three parts and would never be united under one ruler again. However, within these separate parts of the empire harmony was hard to find as well. As we shall see in this chapter, the Bretons started revolting against the Carolingians again, most notably Charles the Bald. In Italy dukes and counts fought for power, amongst each other, as well as against the Carolingians; especially the Beneventans seem to have wanted to be free of Carolingian influence.<sup>116</sup> The second half of the ninth century also is characterised by Neustrian troubles with the Vikings and Saracens attacking the Italian peninsula. Both the internal political struggles, as well as pagan invasions, have had their repercussions on the manner in which the Bretons and Lombards have been represented by Carolingian authors. First, however, we have to take a look into the ethnonym 'Lombard'.

### The Lombard ethnonym

As with the accounts of the first forty years of the ninth century, the names 'Lombard' and 'Lombardy' are scarcely used in the studied Carolingian annals, three times in total. The *AF*'s entry for the year 882 tells how Charles the Fat (839 – 888) is deceived by his Frankish advisers, whilst he is besieging a fortress near Asselt, and savagely defeated by the Northmen.<sup>117</sup> However, this passage is part of the ms. 2 tradition of the *AF*, which can be regarded as a historiographical smear campaign by Liutward of Mainz against Charles. The entry in the Bavarian continuation smooths the narrative and it is in this rewritten version of the defeat, the Lombards are mentioned. Charles gathers an army with men from all over the kingdom, amongst these men are Lombards, in a similar role as we have seen earlier. Charles made a plan that, according to the annalist, would have succeeded if he was not betrayed by some Franks.<sup>118</sup> It is interesting that he is betrayed by Franks, as we have seen treachery was mostly something other peoples were participating in. However, even more interesting is that Lombards are occurring as a distinct people. It shows that even as late as 882 the Franks were well aware that the Lombards existed and hints at a deliberate denial of the Lombards as a distinct group; even though Frankish authors knew Lombards existed, nowhere else Lombards are mentioned as people, not even

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<sup>116</sup> The Breton rebellions will be attested later in this chapter. For a more extensive description of the political situation and developments in Italy, see: Delogu, 'Lombard', 310 – 319; Luigi Berto, 'Remembering old and new rulers: Carolingians and Lombards in Carolingian Italian memory', *The Medieval History Journal* 13:1 (2010), 23 – 53, here 26 - 28.

<sup>117</sup> *AF*, s.a. 882.

<sup>118</sup> '*Post haec praeparatis copiis ex omni suo regno, Longobardis, Alamannis Francisque secum assumptis ille ex occidentali parte aonctra Nordmannos, Baiowarii ex orientali Hreni fluminis usque ad Antrinacham tandem se transmiserant*', *AF*, s.a. 882.

when sources deal with Lombard matters. Inhabitants of the Italian peninsula, if mentioned, and Italian aristocracy are more often identified by their city or duchy than by their ethnicity.

A similar rhetorical tactic shines through with regards to the 'Kingdom of Lombardy'. As mentioned, the royal title the Kings of Italy carried officially still referred to the 'Kingdom of Lombardy', however, Frankish authors more often used the 'King(dom) of Italy'. Remarkably, two accounts of 879, one in the *AB* and the other in the *AF*, still refer to the kingdom as 'Lombardy' or 'of the Lombards'. In the *AB* Hincmar of Rheims reports how in that year Charles the Fat marches into Lombardy and 'seizes that kingdom'.<sup>119</sup> The *AF* report that in that year Carloman (830 – 880) does not keep to the agreement to divide the 'Kingdom of the Lombards' that was made two years before.<sup>120</sup> That this terminology is used in two entries for the year 879 is remarkable, but as there is no clear connection between the sources at this point in time, it might be a coincidence. What it does show, however, is that Frankish authors were well aware then, that the kingdom of Italy still was the kingdom of the Lombards; especially Hincmar, a learned man that stood high on the political ladder, must have known. Frankish authors deliberately chose to neglect that detail and refer to the kingdom as 'Italy' and identify its inhabitants by the city or duchy they came from.

### Treacherous dukes

If people are identified by city or region, perhaps we should look into the civilians and dukes of individual cities to say something about the Lombard identity. However, this is problematic, many dukes were Frankish and civilians rarely occur, at least not enough to build an argument upon. The civilians of Pavia, once the capital of the Lombards, are mentioned one time in the Bavarian Continuation of the *AF*. In 886 they riot against the king's bodyguard and apparently commit mass suicide out of fear for the Emperor's retaliation.<sup>121</sup> It does show signs of resentment against the Carolingians, or at least King Charles (the Fat), but it is not enough evidence to base a rebellious identity on. Besides, it is very hard to prove that the people from Pavia were ethnic Lombards or were perceived as being Lombard. However, one region, Benevento, remained a Lombardic bulwark throughout the ninth century and, although by the sources not directly identified as Lombardic, might give an insight in how the Lombards were perceived by Carolingian historians.

If we look at the Beneventans and the way they are represented in Carolingian historiography after 843, the image of a rebellious people, or at least rebellious dukes, appears. In 860 the *AB* report that the Emperor of Italy, Louis II, is attacked by some of his own people, who these people exactly

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<sup>119</sup> *'in Longobardiam perrexit et ipsum regnum obtinuit'*, *AB*, s.a. 879.

<sup>120</sup> *'Sed quoniam Carlmannus in dividione regni Longobardum iuramentum suum irritum duxit, Hludowicum procul dubio a suo iuramento reddidit immunem'*, *AF*, s.a. 879.

<sup>121</sup> *AF*, s.a. 886.

were is not written, and Louis' reacts destructively. However, this reaction is written to be against the rebelling faction and against the Beneventans.<sup>122</sup> Why Louis also attacks the Beneventans is not mentioned in the source. By leaving the instigators of the rebellion unknown, but associating them with the Beneventans, the narrative in the *AB* blame the Beneventans for the attack.<sup>123</sup> Similarly, in the *AB*'s entry for 871 'the Beneventans' are accused of killing Louis II and his family. It is a rather ruthless deed, were it not that the Beneventans did not do this. However, as Hincmar writes later in the entry, there was a rebellion. Louis II was trapped in a tower and after three days set free.<sup>124</sup> The rebellion was led by Duke Adalgis (d. 878), but most of the account Hincmar writes about 'the Beneventans', implying the whole population was rebelling. In 873 Adalgis and the Beneventans, which had been reconciled with Louis, deflect to the Byzantines and Louis tries to capture Adalgis through a plot involving the pope. Hincmar is not too fond of the way Louis tries to deal with Adalgis, as he scornfully notes that Louis had to resort to such measures, because the emperor could not defeat Adalgis on the battlefield.<sup>125</sup> The Beneventans, then, seem to have been a rebellious people. However, the Beneventans are a small window into the perception of the Lombard identity and the rebellious image crafted might very well be ascribed to political, rather than ethnic, identity. Especially since the Beneventans prove allies to the Carolingian when fighting the Saracens. Before we look into that matter, we will turn to Brittany and the manner in which the Breton leaders are presented.

### Local Breton rulers: Nominoë, Erispoë and Salomon

Appointed by Louis the Pious in 831, Nominoë had been *missus* and *dux* of Brittany for well over a decade when the Treaty of Verdun was signed.<sup>126</sup> However, 843 is the first time we read of him in the *AB*; the Bretons, like the Lombards, had disappeared from the sources in the 830's. Perhaps there was no reason to write about Nominoë and the Bretons earlier, in the period 831 – 842 only one failed attempt at a Breton revolt is recorded; Nominoë seems to have remained loyal to Louis and it was a rather peaceful period.<sup>127</sup> This peaceful period was now over. Early in 843, before the signing of the Treaty of Verdun, Nominoë and Lambert II (d. 852), who after this battle would become Count of Nantes, defected from their loyalty to Charles the Bald and defeated duke Rainald of Nantes (795 –

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<sup>122</sup> *AB*, s.a. 860.

<sup>123</sup> This rebellion was instigated by Lambert of Spoleto (d. 880). He was allied with duke Adalgis of Benevento and sought refuge in Benevento after defeat. This could be the reason Louis also attacks Benevento. Later Lambert would be reinstalled as count. See: Delogu, 'Lombard', 312.

<sup>124</sup> *AB*, s.a. 871.

<sup>125</sup> *AB*, s.a. 873.

<sup>126</sup> Wendy Davies, 'On the distribution of political power in Brittany in the mid-ninth century', in: Margaret Gibson and Janet Nelson (eds.), *Charles the Bald: court and kingdom* (Aldershot, 1981; 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. 1990), 98 – 114, here 100.

<sup>127</sup> This attempted revolt was in 837, *AB*, s.a. 837; Pettiau, 'A prosopography', 179.

843). It would usher in many more disasters of which Prudentius, the annalist for this part of the source, seems to find a famine the worst; plundering brigands had enough food for their horses, but humans had to eat bread made of earth and flour. To make matters even worse, the Northmen plundered Nantes and kill many people, including the bishop.<sup>128</sup> Nominoë is thus presented in one line with savage brigands and, more importantly as we shall see later, the Vikings.

To a certain extent Nominoë takes on the 'rebellious scapegoat role' Morman and Wihomarc also assumed in the *ARF*. However, whereas the rebellions of the latter were squashed not more than a year after they commenced, Nominoë would break agreements and be a nuisance for Charles until his death in 851. In 844 Nominoë 'insolently' crosses the borders of the region assigned to him and his predecessors, indicating the violation of an, in Frankish eyes, longstanding agreement.<sup>129</sup> Prudentius informs us that Nominoë ravished the countryside and sets most of it on fire. He reached Le Mans, but, ironically, had to retreat because the Vikings were attacking his own territory.<sup>130</sup> Later that year, during a peace meeting between him, his allies and delegates of the three Carolingian brothers, he would be accused of infidelity and is urged to become an 'obedient' man that stays 'faithful' in the future.<sup>131</sup> The eventual result of this meeting is not told of, but since it is mentioned that he signs a peace treaty with Charles in 846, it can be assumed it was unsuccessful (at that point in time).<sup>132</sup> However, three years later Nominoë again launched an attack on Anjou, which is not only associated with 'his usual treachery' ('*Nominoius Britto consueta perfidia*'), but also mentioned in the same narrative of a Northmen attack in Aquitaine and a joint Moorish – Saracen sacking in Italy.<sup>133</sup> Nominoë's main characteristic during the 840's is that he is not to be trusted. He shows signs of *perfidia* and is indirectly associated with the Vikings and Saracens.

Nominoë's son, and successor, Erispoë (d. 857) is largely absent from the *AB*. He is mentioned three times before his murder in 857. The first time is in 851 when he goes to Charles on his own initiative to declare loyalty. He is granted not only his father's land, but also some additional territory.<sup>134</sup> In 856 a marriage is arranged between his daughter and the son of Charles, Louis the Stammerer (846 – 879), and he receives control over the county of Nantes and the Breton March.<sup>135</sup> The only time deceit seems to play a role in the relationship between Erispoë and his Carolingian

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<sup>128</sup> *AB*, s.a. 843.

<sup>129</sup> '*Nomenogenius Britto eadem tempestate fines sibi suisque antecessoribus distributos insolenter egrediens*', *AB*, s.a. 844.

<sup>130</sup> *AB*, s.a. 844.

<sup>131</sup> '*Unde et ad Pippinum, Lantbertum atque Nominogenium pacis gratia missos pariter destinant, ut fratri Karolo oboedientes tempore oportuno viriliter conglobati, eorum infidelitatibus ulciscendis se interminando profectorus pronunciant*', *AB*, s.a. 844

<sup>132</sup> *AB*, s.a. 846.

<sup>133</sup> *AB*, s.a. 849.

<sup>134</sup> *AB*, s.a. 851.

<sup>135</sup> *AB*, s.a. 856.



overlord, is when in 852 Charles grants a third of Brittany to Erispoë's cousin and rival Salomon (d. 874) in order to exploit their rivalry.<sup>136</sup> The irony is that the treachery here does not come from the Breton side, but from the Frankish. Both Erispoë and Nominoë ruled Brittany under Charles the Bald for around seven years. However, unlike his father, who was constantly opposes Charles, the *AB* do not tell of any form of treachery from Erispoë's side. *Perfidia* seems not to have been inheritable from father to son anymore.

In 857 Erispoë was murdered by his successor Salomon and, the otherwise unknown Breton, Almar. In the *AB* Salomon initially is an enemy of Charles. The absolute low-point in the relationship between the two was in 862. Count Robert the Strong (820 – 866), who was allied to the Bretons from 858 until 861, now was on Charles side. Salomon hired a fleet of ships from the Vikings in order to attack Robert, but was defeated. Later that year Salomon, Guntfrid and Gauzfrid (d. 878), two Frankish counts who had joined Salomon in 861, convinced Charles' own son, Louis the Stammerer to attack Robert; they even lend men to Louis to make this possible. In the end both Louis and the Bretons were defeated.<sup>137</sup> The ordeals of 862 weakened Salomon to such extent that he had to accept Charles' rule. This event takes place in 863 and is a quite detailed presentation of submission. Charles awaits Salomon in the monastery of Entrammes where the Breton takes an oath of fidelity, the taking of this oath is emphasized a little later by stating that he received land 'in consideration of this oath of fidelity'. It is also mentioned Salomon pays the tribute owed by his land 'according to ancient custom' (*secundum antiquam consuetudinem*). Other traitors who had earlier joined Salomon also were forgiven and after taking an oath receive *honores*. The meeting ends when Charles leaves Entrammes for Le Mans, which emphasizes the location the events took place by mentioning them again.<sup>138</sup> The affair is presented as being a restoration of old bonds. Charles welcomes back the Bretons within the empire and, by emphasizing the monastery, the Christian community.

The treatment of Salomon in the *AB* changes drastically after 863. Of course, he no longer is an enemy, but the annals seem to be stressing the good bonds between Charles and him; a rather positive image is crafted. In 864 the Duke of the Bretons, as Salomon is referred to, pays his tribute to the Frankish king, again it is emphasized that this was an ancient custom. The importance of tradition is stressed by the mention of the *capitula* which Charles issues that year in the manner of his ancestors. Salomon's payment shows a certain loyalty, especially when the account is almost directly followed by two accounts of treachery.<sup>139</sup> In 868 Salomon offers Charles to take care of the Vikings that hold up on the Loire, fighting apparently does not work and the next year he makes peace with these Northmen.

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<sup>136</sup> *AB*, s.a. 852; *The Annals of St.-Bertin*, trans. Nelson, 74 n. 5.

<sup>137</sup> *AB*, s.a. 862; for Guntfrid's and Gauzfrid's betrayal of Charles see: *AB*, s.a. 861.

<sup>138</sup> *AB*, s.a. 863.

<sup>139</sup> *AB*, s.a. 864.

This is presented as a peaceful affair, not only because the account is followed up by telling of how Gauzfrid and Abbot Hugh 'slew' (*interfecerunt*) sixty Vikings, but moreover because immediately after making peace Salomon returns to daily business and harvests wine together with his people.<sup>140</sup> In 873 Charles, in turn, also helps Salomon out against the Vikings and sends an army to prevent the Northmen from plundering the region.<sup>141</sup>

During the last ten years of his rule, Salomon seems to have been regarded as a respectable man by Hincmar. However, upon his death this again changes to the exact opposite. Hincmar writes how Salomon, was betrayed by Breton magnates. Salomon's son was imprisoned and he himself fled into a monastery. Here he is 'caught and surrounded by his own people', emphasizing the betrayal, but the Bretons may do him no harm (the reason why remains unspecified). Because the Bretons cannot hurt Salomon, it is the Franks who blind him 'so savagely that he was found dead the next day'. Hincmar is approving of this practice and sees it as a justified punishment. Salomon had betrayed and slain Erispoë in a church altar, whilst he was crying out for God.<sup>142</sup> In one, horrifying, paragraph Salomon's good nature has vanished and he is treated as a 'traditional Breton'. He is placed outside of the Frankish Christian community, not only by relating his murder of a Christian man in a church, but also by accusing him of betrayal.

The three individual rulers show a varied image, from the 'classic' treacherous role Nominoë seems to play from 843 onwards, to Erispoë's faithful nature, to Salomon who plays both roles to their extreme extent; after initial rebellion his loyalty is continuously stressed, but in the end he still is a worse traitor than Nominoë. However, the peaceful images created of Erispoë and, partially of, Salomon do not seem to be representative of all Bretons. Nominoë did not have power over all of Brittany, which is shown by the Battle of Ballon.<sup>143</sup> This confrontation, where Charles was mercilessly defeated, took place in 845. Although not written in the *AF*'s and *AB*'s account of this battle, this clash was instigated by Breton opponents of Nominoë, who invited Charles into Brittany.<sup>144</sup> Nominoë and his successors never would gain full control over the province and its magnates. For instance, Erispoë's murder, in itself already showing discord, is noted by Prudentius as the result of a longstanding opposition between Erispoë and his murderers.<sup>145</sup>

It is not unexpected, then, that we see Breton groups seemingly act on their own initiative, without a named leader. When this occurs it is almost always in the form of Bretons as antagonist of the Franks. For instance, during the period Salomon and Charles were on good terms, there are 'Bretons' attacks

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<sup>140</sup> *AB*, s.a. 868 and 869.

<sup>141</sup> *AB*, s.a. 873.

<sup>142</sup> *AB*, s.a. 874.

<sup>143</sup> Smith, *Province*, 120.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibidem*, 96; *AB*, s.a. 845; *AF*, s.a. 845.

<sup>145</sup> *AB*, s.a. 857; Smith, *Province*, 120.

the Franks three times. In 865 and 866 they join up with the Northmen and attack Le Mans, killing Robert the Strong in the second raid; and in 868 they, again together with the Northmen, pressure the Bishop of Nantes resulting in him fleeing the city.<sup>146</sup> After Salomon's death they occur another three times, of which, remarkably, only one account is negative. In 878 Gauzfrid, who had defected to from Charles to the Bretons in 861, went to Louis the Stammerer, now king of West Francia, and makes peace with him. He brings with him a group of Bretons who swear loyalty to the king, but eventually abandon their allegiance. This treachery is not written of explicitly, but the idea of inherent Breton *perfidia* seems to still have been alive as Hincmar mentions that 'they behaved in the end the way Bretons always do'.<sup>147</sup>

### Bretons and Vikings, Lombards and Saracens

As we have seen in the previous part, on multiple occasions the Bretons are connected to the Vikings, both battling and working together with them. This is also the case with the last two accounts regarding the Bretons in the studied sources. These are the *AB*'s entry for 882, wherein it is told Charles wants to battle the Vikings together with the Bretons; and the entry for the year 890 in the *AV*, wherein the Bretons are complimented for courageously defending their *regnum* from the Vikings.<sup>148</sup> In these accounts the Bretons are not Frankish enemies, but, like Salomon once had been, Frankish allies battling against enemy number one: the Northmen; especially in the *AV* where the Breton victory immediately is followed by a victory of Odo (852 – 898) on the Vikings: the Bretons and Franks are bound by a common enemy. The only other time the Bretons are seen opposing the Vikings, except for when Salomon attacks them, is in the short period of peace between Nominoë and Charles the Bald. In 847 the Northmen attack Brittany and defeat Nominoë three times. In the end, he can 'soften them up' with bribes. The remarkable feature about this account in the *AB*, is that later in the entry the Carolingian brothers send an envoy to the Danish king, Horic, to put an end to Danish attacks on Christians. Thus, the Bretons are identified as being Christians and perhaps even part of the *populus Christianus*.<sup>149</sup>

To fully understand this, however, we have to look into the times the Bretons worked together, or are mentioned in one breath, with the Vikings. Allying with the Northmen automatically made them into enemies of the Franks, and therefore of the *populus Christianus*. Probably the most revealing event in this regard is the death of Robert the Strong in 866, which is written of in both the *AB*, as well

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<sup>146</sup> *AB*, s.a. 865 and 866; *AF*, s.a. 866; *AB*, s.a. 868.

<sup>147</sup> *AB*, s.a. 878.

<sup>148</sup> *AB*, s.a. 882; This is the only time Brittany is called a *regnum*, kingdom, in the annals that were used for this study. As mentioned earlier, sometimes the dukes would be referred to as *rex*, this does not occur in these sources, which refer to the Breton leaders as either 'duke' or 'chief'. See: *AV*, s.a. 890.

<sup>149</sup> *AB*, s.a. 847.

as the *AF*. Robert was killed in Battle with the Northmen and Bretons, the *AB* have little sympathy for Robert as Hincmar sees his death as a punishment for accepting the abbacy of St. Martin; Hincmar strongly opposed lay abbacies.<sup>150</sup> In this entry the Bretons become part of a 'rod of God's wrath' type of discourse; a discourse, largely based on the Old Testament, wherein the Vikings were seen as the punishment of God for sinful behaviour of the Franks.<sup>151</sup> On the other hand, the *AF* are very positive about Robert upon his death, in this source recorded for the year 867. The annalist compares Robert's deeds against the Bretons and Northmen with the deeds of Macchabeus, and even identifies Robert as 'a second Macchabeus in our times'.<sup>152</sup> Macchabeus was a Jewish rebel from the Old Testament, who fought against the pagan King Antiochus IV.<sup>153</sup> If we take the Frankish ethnographical framework based on the Old Testament in mind, then we see that the Bretons, and the pagan Northmen, through this reference are placed outside of the *populus Christianus*. The manner in which Robert is remembered by the two sources differs greatly, perhaps it has something to do with an earlier alliance he had with the Bretons, which is recorded in the *AB*, but not in the *AF*.<sup>154</sup> However, for the perception of the Bretons this discrepancy does not differ too much, in both cases, although the sentiment is stronger in the account from the *AF*, they are presented as pagans opposing the *populus Christianus*. This makes it so that other accounts wherein the Bretons are working together with the Northmen, are mentioned in one breath with the Northmen, or are opposing the Franks, do place the Bretons in a pagan role outside of the *populus Dei*.

The Beneventans also have contact with non-Christians: the Saracens. However, for Carolingian historians the Muslim invaders would prove a means to incorporate the Beneventans in the *populus Christianus*. In the *AB*'s entry for 842, we read that internal quarrels amongst the Beneventans lead to some of them inviting Saracens to help them out. The Saracens had other plans than to help and took several Beneventan *civitates* for themselves, the next year they are, 'with God's help', defeated.<sup>155</sup> Because of this, the Beneventans are not presented in a positive fashion in the entries for 842 and 843. In 844, however, Duke Sinigulf is said to have paid the, rather large, sum of 100.000 gold pieces to Lothar as a form of self-punishment. What this was a punishment for is not revealed, but the manner in which the narrative is build up in these three years, almost seems to suggest he was somehow involved with the Saracens. Now, however, he is on the Frankish side, is accepted by the Beneventans as duke and expels the last remnants of the Saracens from Benevento.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> *AB*, s.a. 866; *The Annals of St.-Bertin*, trans. Nelson, 135 n. 3.

<sup>151</sup> Simon Coupland, 'The rod of God's wrath, or the people of God's wrath? The Carolingian theology of the Viking Invasions', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 42:4 (1991), 535 – 554.

<sup>152</sup> *AF*, s.a. 867.

<sup>153</sup> 1 Maccabees 1 – 9.

<sup>154</sup> *AB*, s.a. 859.

<sup>155</sup> *AB*, s.a. 842 and 843.

<sup>156</sup> *AB*, s.a. 844.

Unlike the Bretons who often worked together with the Vikings, this is the only time the Beneventans worked with the Saracens. The Beneventans mostly are portrayed battling the invaders; the *AB*, in its entry for 845, imply an archrivalry by calling a new war between the two peoples, the result of old disputes flaring up again.<sup>157</sup>

This old and perpetuating antagonism between the Saracens and the Beneventans has an important consequence for their identity. The effect of their opposition to the Muslim Saracens is that their own Christian identity is strengthened. On multiple occasions conflicts with the Saracens are presented as Christianity opposing Islam, and on multiple occasions Benevento, or the Beneventans are present in these narratives. When, in 846, the Saracens plunder the Basilica of Saint Peter in Rome and slaughter many Christians, the *AX* mention that the invaders had already occupied Benevento earlier.<sup>158</sup> For the entry of 869 the same annals report that Louis II, according to the source often an annoyance to the pope, was unable to defeat the Moors who were settled in Benevento.<sup>159</sup> The *AF*'s entry for 867 identifies Italy as a whole as a 'province of Christianity' (*'Christtianae religionis provincias'*), together with Germany, Neustria and Gaul.<sup>160</sup> Benevento, as part of Italy, is identified as Christian territory, that should be protected from the Muslim intruders. Their opposition to the Saracens does not only confirm their Christian identity, to a certain extent they can be regarded as defenders of Christianity or the *populus Christianus*.

We have seen that in the second half of the ninth century, the Carolingian representations of the Breton and Lombard identities become more diverse than what we saw in the previous chapter. The Beneventans, representing the Lombards, are placed outside the Frankish community through their rebelling leaders, whilst their opposition to the Saracens makes them part of the *populus Christianus*. This, however, is rather strict: in political matters they are the Other, in religious matters they are the same. The Breton identity proves to be harder to pinpoint. They constantly switch between being trustworthy allies and perfidious people, who ought to be placed outside of the Christian community, together with the pagans.

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<sup>157</sup> *AB*, s.a. 845.

<sup>158</sup> *AX*, s.a. 846.

<sup>159</sup> *AX*, s.a. 869.

<sup>160</sup> *AF*, s.a. 867.

## Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to find out how the Breton and Lombard identities are perceived and, above all, represented in Carolingian annalistic works. A second goal was to show how these representations changed over the course of 150 years, from 751 until 901. Even though annals are regarded to be dry as dust works of history, we still have gained an interesting insight in the workings of identity in the late eighth and ninth centuries. It is remarkable that the annals give little to no attention to cultural markers of identity mentioned by, for instance, Regino of Prüm, and would be indicators of difference in modern times, such as language, law, customs and origin. Notions of identity are more implicit and discourse-driven; especially in the *ARF* the 'Franks as *populus Christianus*' discourse dictates how other peoples are represented.

The period up until 843 both the Breton and the Lombard identities take a similar form, both peoples are presented as opponents of the Christian community the Franks belong to. This is mostly visible in the *ARF* and the additions the Reviser made to it. The *ARF* are a source that tries to set up the Frankish people as the *populus Dei*, God's favourites, or *populus Christianus*, the Christian community. At the helm of God's chosen people is the Carolingian king, and later Emperor. Before they were subjugated the Lombards are presented as enemies of Saint Peter, the pope and the church. It was the perfect opportunity for the authors of the *ARF* to set the Carolingians up as the saviour and protector of the Church. Similarly, the Bretons are placed outside of the Christian community of the Franks by continuously rebelling and showing perfidious behaviour. Treachery was not seen as an insult to the Franks, or perhaps it is better to say Carolingians, but it also was an insult to God; betraying God's Chosen, was betraying God himself. This is similar to the manner in which the Saxons are depicted in the *ARF*. The Breton identity, and perhaps to a certain extent the Lombard identity, were not the identities of the respective peoples, they were 'non-Frankish' identities.

Both peoples start to disappear from the sources during the 790's. Most clearly this happens with the Lombards, who almost completely vanish after 792, and only return to emphasize Carolingian *imperium*. Two explanations can be given. The first is that there was no conflict anymore, the Lombards were integrated into the Frankish community and had stopped rebelling. There simply was no use for speaking about the Lombards anymore. The second reason is only applicable to the *ARF* and could tie in with the first explanation. Around 793 the first part of the source was finished and the author of the second part did not feel the need to speak of 'Lombards'. The Bretons disappear from the sources for a short time during the 830's. The Breton Nominoë kept most Bretons in line and by doing that, removed the need for Frankish authors to write about the Bretons. This means that disobedience to the Carolingians was a matter in which the ethnic identity played an important role. Accusing the peoples of rebellion, treachery and not keeping oaths was a means to 'Other' people.

This also becomes visible after the Treaty of Verdun; which marks the introduction of varied Lombard and Breton identities. The process of 'forgetting' the Lombards is continued. Their existence and the history of their kingdom, is actively neglected by Frankish authors. It could be that Lombards are not mentioned, because the authors did not know they existed. However, this is debunked by the use of the ethnonym 'Lombard' and referring to the 'Kingdom of the Lombards' in the late ninth century. A second reason the Lombard identity is less important after 843, is that Italy was the set for a powerplay between magnates, who were trying to gain power. Since these men, the main actors on the Italian stage, often were not Lombards, but Franks, the Lombard identity did not matter in Italian questions. Benevento is an exception and remained Lombardic, this means they offer a, small, window into the Lombard identity. The sources create a diverse image of the Beneventans. On the one hand they are Christian defenders against the Muslim Saracens; they are part of the Christian community. On the other, their dukes are portrayed as rebellious, trying to gain power and independence from the Carolingians. It is hard, however, to tie this to an ethnic 'Lombard' identity, as this is part of the powerplay the other dukes are involved in as well.

Where the Lombards are disappearing, the Bretons start a revival and return to the Carolingian stage. They are depicted as returning to their old rebellious ways, which makes them relevant again. The image shaped of the Bretons, and the means to other them, in the second half of the ninth century is diverse. The Bretons, and their leaders from Nominoë's dynasty, seem to wander a thin line between being faithful, and part of the Frankish Christian community; and being treacherous, rebelling and fighting with the Vikings, ultimately placing them outside of the *populus Christianus* by presenting them as pagans and emphasizing this by references to the Old Testament. They would eventually be accepted within the Frankish community and be complimented for their courage against their former allies, the Vikings. However, the image that was set up in the *ARF* would prove persistent, as they are still perceived as inherently treacherous in the *AB's* entry for 879.

Early medieval identities, or at least the way they are represented in Carolingian historiography, prove to be fluid. The identities, and means of othering, that were set in stone by the *ARF* show signs of wear in the second half of the ninth century. Political fragmentation and shifting loyalties made it almost impossible to retain earlier representations. Although the Bretons prove that it most certainly played a role, identities became less tied to a certain *gens*, persons and peoples would be judged according to a situation. Fighting Muslims could make a person a good Christian, however, this did not mean he automatically was a good Frank, or part of the Frankish community; if he was a rebel, he would still be excluded. A man betraying his cousin could very well be accepted by the Frankish community, but eventually could be cast out for his initial betrayal.

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